

# Grant Application Checklist:

**FEEDING FLORIDA**  
Florida's Food Bank Network



Fresh Access Bucks (FAB), an initiative of Feeding Florida, is the state's nutrition incentive (NI) program funded with Florida legislative and federal support. FAB increases access to fresh, affordable produce in underserved communities while supporting Florida's farmers and enhancing local economies.

This checklist is designed to walk you through every major step of a strong grant proposal. From understanding the funder to managing funds and data after receiving an award. It's written for beginners but thorough enough to build professional habits early on.

## 1. Understand the Funder's Mission and Priorities

- Research the funding organization
  - What causes do they support? What are their goals, values, and recent projects funded? Attend a grant webinar or FAQ session put on by funder, if available.
- Check eligibility
  - Make sure your organization or project type qualifies (nonprofit, school, municipality, etc.).
- Ensure the requirements of the grant align with your project goals
  - How do the goals of your organization align with the funder? Will there be mutual benefit from this arrangement?

### Why it matters:

Funders want to invest in projects that advance their own mission. A well-aligned proposal increases your chances of success and shows respect for the funder's intent.

## 2. Read the Request for Proposals (RFP)/ Grant Guidelines Thoroughly

- Read every section carefully
  - Don't skim. Note specific requirements (page limits, file formats, word counts).
- List all questions or documents they request
  - (narrative, budget, letters of support, resumes, audits, etc.).
- Clarify deadlines and submission method
  - (online portal, email, mail).
- Check the reporting requirements and ensure you have the capacity to fulfill them.
  - Time, energy, online or physical reporting, etc.

### Why it matters:

Missing even one required item or misunderstanding an instruction can result in automatic disqualification.





### 3. Define Clear Project Goals, Activities, and Outcomes

- State what problem you're solving
  - Use data or community evidence.
- Set measurable objectives
  - What exactly will change or improve?
- Outline your methods and timeline
  - Who will do what, and when?
- Describe expected outcomes and how you'll measure them.

#### Why it matters:

Funders need to see that your plan is realistic, organized, and measurable. Clear goals show you can deliver results.

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### 4. Include Community Impact Data, Stories, and Metrics

- Use both numbers and stories
  - Statistics show reach; stories show real human change.
- Use local data sources
  - (census, public health, school data, etc.) when possible.
- Demonstrate equity and inclusion
  - Who benefits and how?

#### Why it matters:

Funders want evidence that your project will create real, lasting community benefit.

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### 5. Develop a Detailed and Justified Budget

- List all expenses.
  - Staff time, materials, equipment, travel, outreach, evaluation, indirect costs, etc.
- Match expenses to activities
  - Show how each dollar connects to specific project work.
- Include in-kind contributions or matching funds (if required).
- Double-check totals and categories for math accuracy.
- Plan to use all funds by the end date.
  - If you don't, you may need to return unspent money.

#### Why it matters:

A solid, transparent budget proves you can manage funds responsibly.

#### Important:

If you don't use all the funds, or spend them on items not approved, it can hurt your credibility and future grant eligibility. Funders track this closely.



## 6. Create a Strong Data Collection and Reporting Plan

- Set up systems for tracking participation, outcomes, and spending.
- Use sign-in sheets, surveys, financial logs, or case notes as appropriate.
- Assign a staff person to handle data and reporting.
- Keep documentation organized and backed up (digital + paper).

### Why it matters:

Accurate data and records prove your impact and secure future funding — poor documentation can cost you future grants.

## 7. Plan for Sustainability and Sharing Your Impact

- Describe how you'll report results
  - Quarterly, annually, or at project completion.
  - Plan time for report writing and financial reconciliation.
  - Keep funder relationships alive
  - Send updates, photos, and success stories even after reporting.
- Explain how the project will continue after the grant period ends (through partnerships, donations, new revenue, etc.).

### Why it matters:

Funders prefer to support organizations that plan long-term and communicate transparently.

## 8. Review, Edit, and Proofread Thoroughly

- Check spelling, grammar, and clarity.
- Ask someone outside your project to review for understanding.
- Verify all attachments are labeled correctly and uploaded in the right format.

### Why it matters:

Clean, professional writing shows you're competent and credible. Mistakes distract from your message.





## 9. Submit Early and Confirm Receipt

- Submit at least 24 hours before the deadline in case of technical issues.
- Save a confirmation email or screenshot of submission.
- Note who to contact if there are problems.

### Why it matters:

Late or incomplete submissions are almost never accepted. Always have proof you met the deadline.

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## 10. After Submission: Prepare for Follow-Up

- Keep all copies of your proposal, budget, and attachments.
- Be ready to provide clarification if funders ask questions.

### If funded:

- Track all expenses carefully against your budget.
- Document activities and outcomes as you go.
- Spend all funds responsibly within the grant period.

### If NOT funded:

- Ask for feedback and keep your materials for future use.

### Why it matters:

Grant writing is a long game. Strong documentation, spending discipline, and relationship-building increase your success over time.

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## Final Tips:

- Keep a grant binder (physical or digital) with copies of the RFP, your proposal, budget, reports, receipts, data logs, and correspondence.
- Always know when your final report is due and start preparing it early.
- Funders talk — good or bad performance on one grant can influence your reputation across many.

